

COVID-19 Briefing

City Council Special Meeting – March 24, 2020

Public Health Update

Jeff Zayach, Boulder County Public Health Director

Hospital Update

Robert Vissers, Boulder Community Health

City Update

Jane Brautigam, City Manager

Kurt Firnhaber, Housing and Human Services Director

Yvette Bowden, Assistant City Manager and Community Vitality Director

Carl Castillo Chief Policy Advisor

City of Boulder Response

- Response Guiding Principles:
 - Preserve Health Care System – Flatten Curve
 - Ensure Continuity of Government – Deliver Essential Services
 - Focus on Equity – All community members are included
- Response Team Objectives
 - Effective communication
 - Ensure continuity of operations
 - Meet emergency needs in coordination with partners
 - Equitably care for employees and community
 - Identify and address ways this pandemic may exacerbate existing inequities



Focus On Essential Services

- Critical Essential Services
 - Law Enforcement (Police & OSMP Rangers)
 - Fire-Rescue
 - Water
 - Wastewater
 - Transportation Access
 - Citywide COVID-19 Response Team
- Other Essential Services
 - P&R Forestry
 - P&DS Right-of-Way Inspectors & Building Inspectors
 - Internal Operations (Finance, City Attorney's Office HR, etc)



Communications

- Continue to issue information in English and Spanish.
- New resources have been added to the city website, including information about: accessing city services, senior shopping hours, financial assistance, food assistance, donations, business resources and a wide variety of ever-growing FAQs.
- Video Services is producing weekly COVID-19 news in English and Spanish.
- Council members have produced videos in English and Spanish to update the community.
- Traffic to the city website is up 58% from average
- City COVID-19 webpages received 115,000 page views (53% of all city web traffic)
- 5,200 likes, shares, comments and questions on its COVID-19 social media posts





COVID-19 Recovery Center and Homelessness Responses

Kurt Firnhaber, Director of Housing and Human Services

Homeless System Response Phase 1

- Phase 1: Increase Prevention Methods
 - Moved Path to Home Navigation program to Boulder Shelter for the Homeless
 - Expand spacing for Severe Weather Shelter beds at 2961 30th Street location
 - Improve cleaning, masking, and isolation protocols
 - Move Coordinated Entry to phone option
- Implemented on March 16



Homeless System Response Phase 2

- Phase 2: Create COVID-19 Recovery Center (CRC)
 - Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operation
 - Current space for 47 beds with ability to expand if needed
 - Staffed by City of Boulder, City of Longmont, Boulder County employees and community volunteers
 - Provides respite care – not treatment. Medical Reserve Corps providing rounds and assessments for hospital needs daily
 - Public Health supporting PPE & operational protocols.
- Implemented on March 20



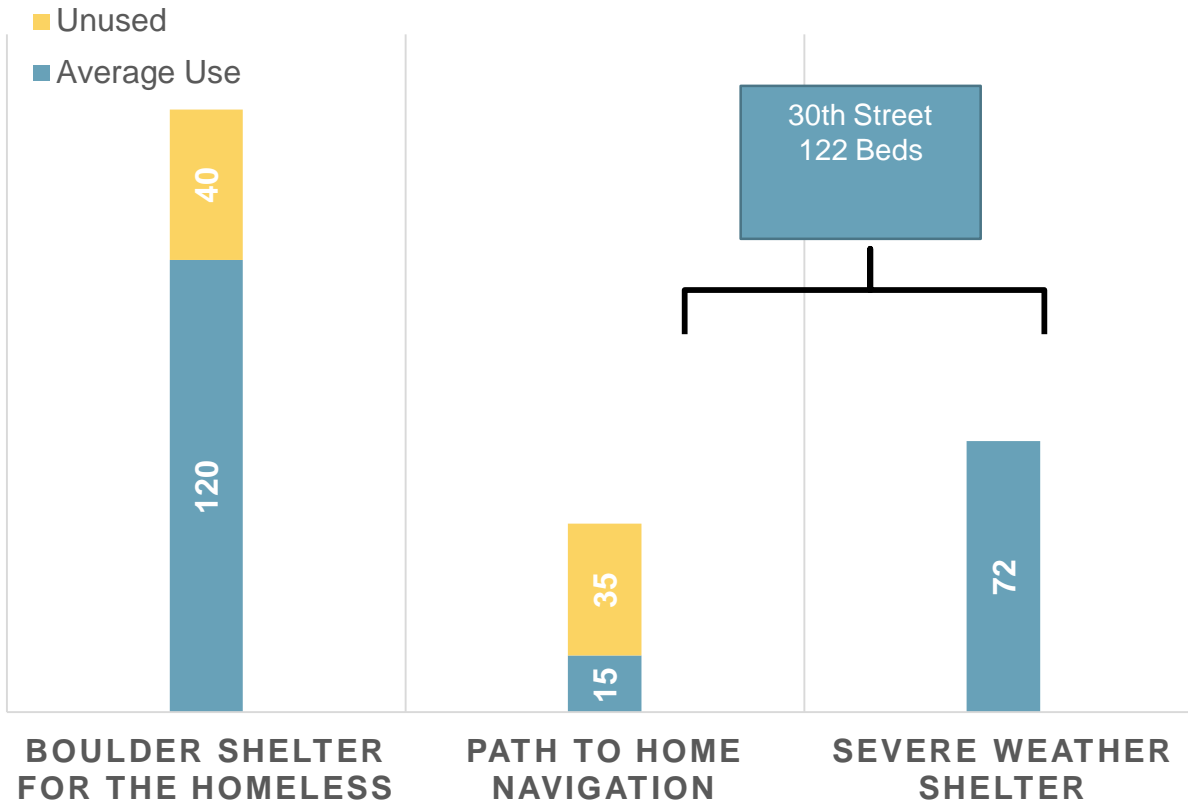
COVID-19 Recovery Center (CRC)

- Currently, 6 people staying in the facility
 - March 20: 1 person referred from Clinica
 - March 21: Expanded to BSH and SWS
 - March 23 – Expanded to Longmont
- If person screens symptomatic, vans transport to CRC
 - Also includes transport from Boulder Community Health and Clinica
 - Not a walk-up shelter
- Goal is to keep shelters functioning and healthy

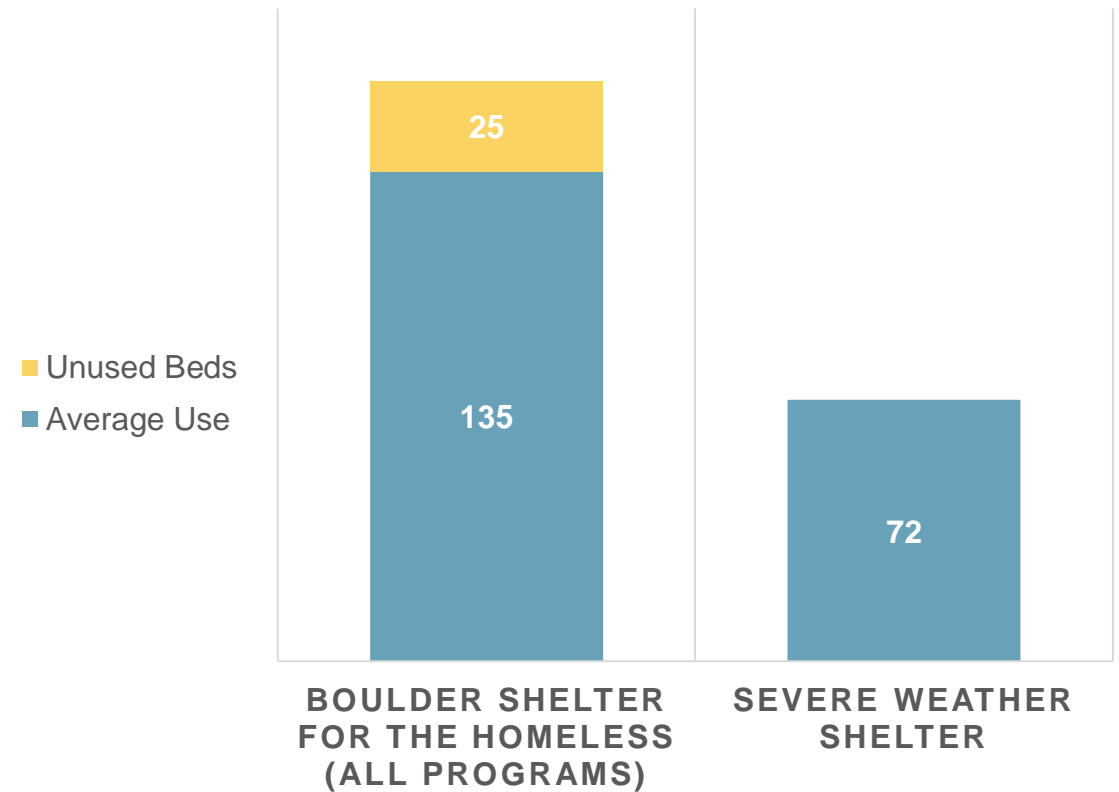


Shelter Capacity

Before Phase I Implementation



After Phase I Implementation



Standing up the Covid-19 Recovery Center

- Friday 3/20 – Monday 3/23:
- **321.5 Total Volunteer Hours** (staff and community volunteers)
- **157 hrs** from community volunteers
- **164.5 hrs** from staff volunteers
- 50+ shifts covered at CRC, Screeners and Drivers
- 87% of shifts are currently filled for next 5 days (3/24-3/28)
*subject to change



Severe Weather Shelter

- 2020 - increase in SWS attendance and decrease in Navigation
 - Jan.1-Feb.28, 2019 Average = 68.92
 - Jan.1-Feb.29, 2020 Average = 93.85
- Prior to Phase 1
 - Used overflow beds
 - Often exceeded 30th Street Capacity
- After Phase 1
 - Two-day snow event with 12-19 per night
 - Van shuttle to BSH for use of overflow beds from March 20



Severe Weather Shelter Protocols

- Public health-informed decisions
 - In warmer weather, safer to be outside
- Day sheltering is available when daytime SWS weather triggers are met
 - Public Health concerns for 24/7 congregant living
 - Shelter staff capacity
 - Need time to properly clean buildings
- After March 31, SWS returns to weather-triggered opening



Rental Assistance

- Boulder County Regional Funding Collaborative providing funding for rental assistance including
 - EFAA
- State released \$3M to PHAs
 - BCHA, BHP and LHA coordinating on programming and release of funds regionally
- Review occurring for housing providers
- Sources: local funds, CDBG funds, state funding, federal funds
- Eviction and Foreclosures
 - All non-essential residential and business evictions on hold until 5/31
 - Foreclosure and eviction moratorium for single family homeowners with FHA-insured mortgages
 - Gov. Polis executive order limiting evictions, foreclosures, and public utility disconnection





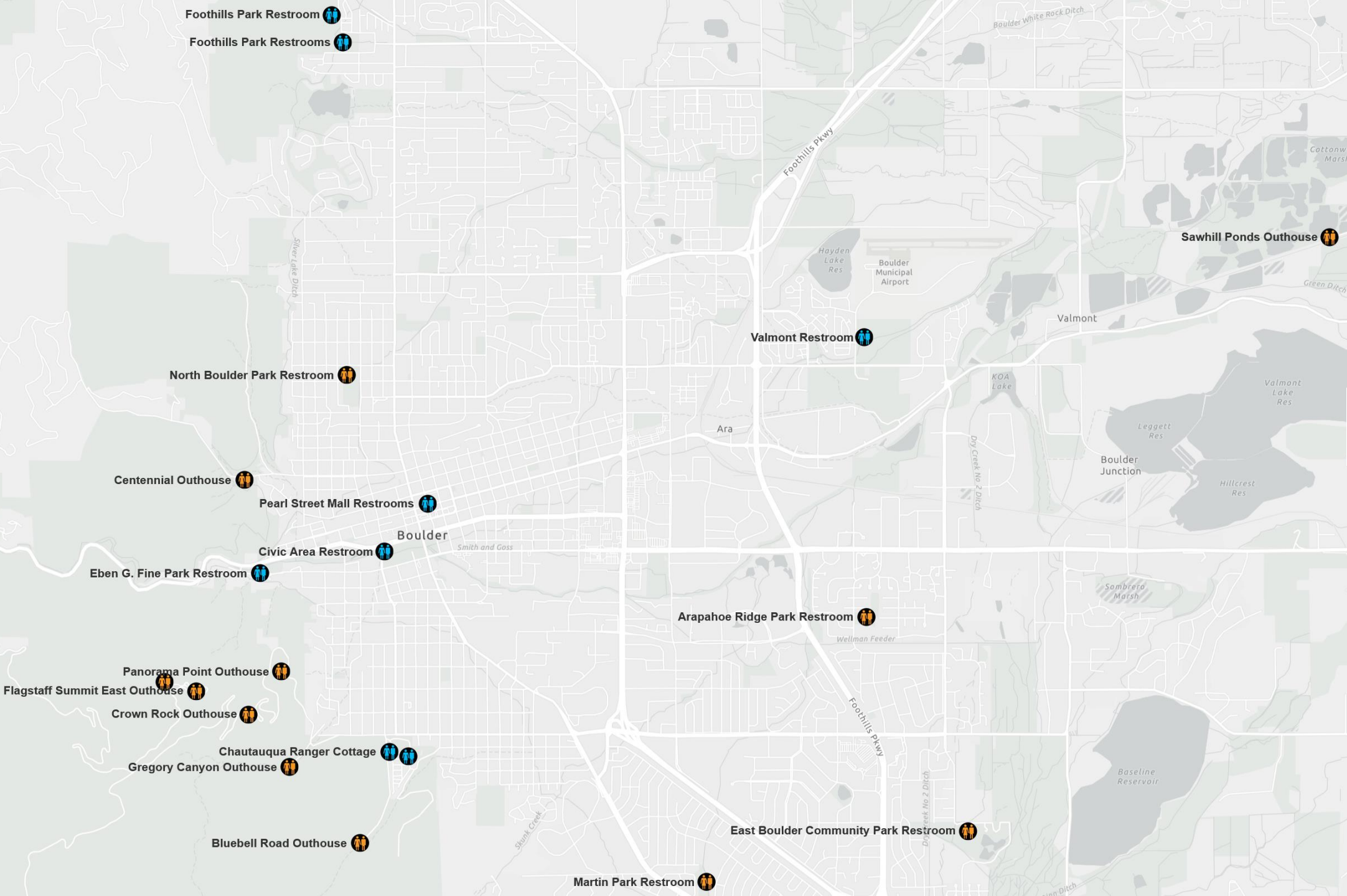
Boulder County Funding Collaborative

- Members: City of Boulder, City of Longmont, Boulder County, community foundations
 - Frequency: Members meet daily; Meet with all Community Agencies 2x week
- Coordinated basic service needs assessment, timely/equitable distribution of funds, identify emerging needs
- Since 3/16, approx. \$870K released/identified for immediate release to support agencies regionally



Public Restroom Facilities In Boulder

-  Public Restroom
-  Public Porta Potty or Outhouse
-  Public Restroom Closed



City, State and Federal Response to Economic Impact

Yvette Bowden, Assistant City Manager and Community Vitality Director
Carl Castillo, Chief Policy Advisor

Federal Response to Economic Impact

- **\$8.3 billion "Corona Virus Preparedness and Response Act" (COVID-1)** - Mostly health-focused, but provided \$20 million for the US Small Business Administration
- **\$100 billion + "Families First Coronavirus Response Act" (COVID-2)**– Provided sick leave, free coronavirus testing, expanded food assistance, unemployment benefits, and required employers to provide additional protections for health care workers
- **\$1.8 trillion stimulus package under consideration (COVID-3)**
 - Cash payments to families
 - Increased loans to business through SBA
 - Expansion of unemployment insurance benefits
 - Increased funding for state and local governments
 - \$500 billion fund to offer loans to struggling industries
 - Increased resources for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to people affected by the pandemic



State Response to Economic Impact

- **Foreclosures** - Banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions holding residential or commercial mortgages encouraged to halt foreclosures and related evictions.
- **Utilities** - Public utilities discouraged from disconnecting service for delayed or missed payments from residential and small business consumers.
- **Evictions** - Property owners and landlords asked to refrain from removing tenants or mobile homeowners without cause or as a result of late rent payment or minor tenancy violations
- **Unemployment Payments** - The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's (CDLE) Unemployment Insurance Division asked to expedite claim payments
- **Income Tax** - Extended the income tax payment deadline for all Colorado taxpayers by 90 No caps on the amount of tax that can be deferred.



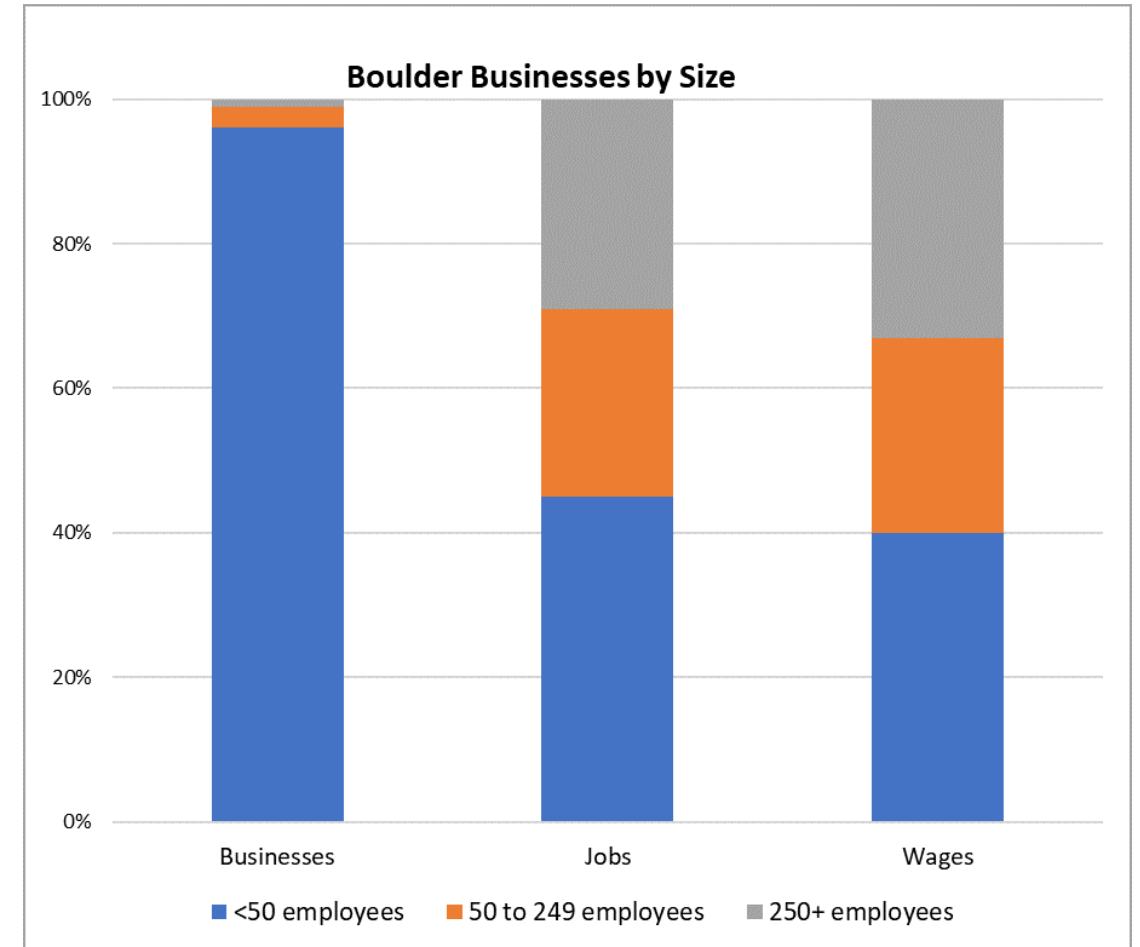
Boulder Businesses & the Local Economic Impact

Most of Boulder's 7,000 businesses are small

- 96% have ≤ 50 employees
- Over three-fourths (78%) ≤ 10 employees
- Small businesses provide approximately half of the jobs and roughly 40% of wages in Boulder
- Businesses with 50 or more employees represent only four percent of Boulder businesses. Less than one percent have 250 or more employees.

Retail businesses generate sales and use tax

- Contribute @ 50% of GF revenues (excluding utilities)



Excerpt from Council IP on Small Business Support – January 2020



Needs of Boulder Businesses - Survey (Issued 3/12/20)

Issued on-line by Boulder Chamber of Commerce; 308+ Responses

Expressed Priority Needs:

- *Resources for operating expenses*
- *Resources to assist impacted employees*
- *Information on safe operations*
- *Consideration of short-term expense mitigation (incl. commercial space rental obligations, taxes and fees)*
- *A plan for the future*



Coordinated Response

City coordinating with economic vitality partners monitoring and responding to business, worker and community needs

Goals:

- *Support direction & guidance prioritizing public health and safety*
- *Adapt local practices toward accommodating provision of essential services*
- *Anticipate & respond to the needs of impacted residents, businesses and their staffs*
- *Appreciate the current state of business impacts while planning for Boulder's local economic resilience*



Coordinated Response – Action To Date

- Federal SBA loan application; State and locally available grants
- City Business Resources dedicated webpage
 - <https://bouldercolorado.gov/coronavirus-business-resources>
 - Related news updates
 - Consultation and application assistance links
 - Information on safe operations and *FREE* webinars
 - Links to webpages for job opportunity and resume posting
- Promotion of gift card/certificate, purchase opportunities (delivery and limited pick-up) and publication of ‘safe shopping’ providers
- Outreach to the Restaurateurs and to Commercial Landowners
- ‘*#LoveTheLocal*’ initiative and other outreach and promotion
- Continued exploration of assistance (for small businesses and impacted workers)
- Ongoing coordination with Governor’s Office, Congressional representative and the County



Continued Action and Analysis

- April 28th Council Study Session will include a sales tax update
- Ongoing pursuit or advocating for federal/state assistance for impacted businesses and workers
- Connecting businesses and workers to currently available assistance programs
- Soliciting data on scale of economic impact
 - Temporary business closures & experienced revenue decline
 - Workforce impacts
- Monitoring and aligning with federal, state and peer community initiatives
- *Boulder For Me* soft launch

